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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/601,962	06/23/2003	John W. Collins	0416-04	8781
21704	7590	12/07/2004	EXAMINER	
LAW OFFICES OF ERIC KARICH 2807 ST. MARK DR. MANSFIELD, TX 76063			HUANG, SIHONG	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2632	

DATE MAILED: 12/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/601,962

Applicant(s)

COLLINS, JOHN W.

Examiner

Sihong Huang

Art Unit

2632

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 June 2003.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/23/03.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The preamble of claim 12 is not consistent with claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12-14 and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adcox et al. (US 6,359,570 B1) in view of Warner (US 5,963,129).

Regarding claim 1, Adcox disclosed a vehicle legal compliance system for reporting a compliance status of a vehicle, the vehicle legal compliance system comprising:

a central computer (42, and the terminal next to operator 48) having a vehicle database (42), the vehicle database being adapted for storing a unique vehicle identifier (vehicle identification VID) associated with the vehicle, and the compliance status of the vehicle (col. 5, line 46 to col. 6, line 16 and col. 3, line 64 to col. 4, line 14);

Art Unit: 2632

a central processor (41) for converting the unique vehicle identifier (VID) and the compliance status (col. 5, line 46 to col. 6, line 16 and col. 3, line 64 to col. 4, line 14) into a status indicator signal (col. 4, lines 16-18);

a central transmitter/receiver (49, col. 6, line 18 and col. 4, lines 22-25) for transmitting the status indicator signal; and

a legal compliance indicator (12) having a vehicle transmitter/receiver (15 and col. 4, lines 22-25), a microprocessor (16, the processor 16 is programmable, col. 9, lines 24-25) which is operably attached to a status indicator (65 and Fig. 7) such that the vehicle transmitter/receiver (15 and col. 4, lines 22-25) receives the status indicator signal, and the microprocessor decodes (processor 16 includes coder/decoder 17) the status indicator signal (col. 4, lines 25-29),

the legal compliance indicator (12) being adapted to be operably attached to the vehicle (col. 5, lines 12-15) for displaying the status indicator (Fig. 7).

Adcox differs from **claim 1** of the present invention in that Adcox does not disclose that the status indicator signal controls the status indicator or display (or “the status indicator signal is operably controlled by the status indicator signal”). Warner, from the same field of endeavor, similarly teaches a vehicle legal compliance system having a legal compliance indicator with a status indicator (28) which is operably controlled by the status indicator signal from the central computer 22 (col. 2, lines 21-23, col. 4, lines 56-62, col. 6, lines 42-47 and 64-65). As both Adcox and Warner disclosed a vehicle legal compliance system, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the teaching of Warner to the system

of Adcox, in order to not only allow the police in the vicinity of the vehicle to control the display but also provide the additional advantage of allowing a personnel in central computer to control the display of the status indicator.

Regarding claim 2, Adcox includes an external computer (any one of 43-47) connected to a computer network (the network connecting external computers to database 42, see Fig. 4), connecting means (note, since any one of external computers 43-47 can provide update status to the central computer, there must be a connecting means for connecting them for updating), and importing means (note, when any one of the external computers updates the central computer, data is being imported from the external computer to the central computer, see col. 5, line 46 to col. 6, line 16).

Regarding claim 3, the external computer is a DMV computer (44).

Regarding claim 4, the external computer is an insurance company computer (43).

Regarding claim 5, the external computer is a law enforcement computer (46).

Regarding claims 7-9, the vehicle database includes a DMV status, insurance status, and a theft status (col. 5, line 46 to col. 6, line 16 and col. 7, line 52 to col. 8, line 24).

Regarding claim 12, the status indicator includes a green light and a red light (Fig. 7). Although Adcox does not disclose LED, Adcox does disclose that it may utilize simple status indicators such as green, yellow and red status panels or lights to indicate a summary status of the vehicle (col. 7, lines 45-47). Based on this teaching, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use

either LED or LCD as indicator means. The motivation for using LED is to reduce cost and have a simpler circuit design.

Regarding claim 13, when the compliance status (for example, the insurance status) of the vehicle is compliant, the green light is illuminated (by way of example, when the insurance is compliance with the state law, a green light may be illuminated, col. 7, lines 62-64) and the red light is not illuminated (the red light is illuminated only when the vehicle is uninsured, therefore, when the vehicle is insured, the red light is not illuminated). Likewise, when the compliance status of the vehicle is non-compliant (for example, uninsured), the red light is illuminated (col. 7, lines 66-67) and the green light is not illuminated (the green light is illuminated only when the vehicle is insured, therefore, when the vehicle is uninsured, the green light is not illuminated).

Regarding claim 14, Adcox disclosed a method for monitoring a compliance status of a vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a vehicle legal compliance system having
 - a central computer (see Fig. 4) having a vehicle database (42) and a central transmitter/receiver (49 and col. 4, lines 22-24); and
 - a legal compliance indicator (12) having a central processor (16), a memory (18), and a status indicator (65, Fig. 7);
- b) storing a unique vehicle identifier (VID) in the memory (18) of the legal compliance indicator (12, see col. 4, lines 27-29, also shown in Figs. 1 and 6);
- c) attaching the legal compliance indicator (12) to the vehicle for visually displaying the status indicator (col. 5, lines 12-15);

d) storing a unique vehicle identifier associated with the vehicle, and the compliance status of the vehicle, in the vehicle database (the VID and updated status information are encoded at the central for transmission to compliance indicator 12, therefore, VID and the status information must be stored at central, col. 4, lines 15-18. Further, the VID must be stored with the status information in order to distinguish one vehicle from the others.);

e) creating a status indicator code based upon the compliance status (since the status information includes vehicle registrations, safety inspections, automobile insurance, and auto theft, etc., different signals or codes corresponding to different statuses must be created for transmission to vehicle);

f) transmitting (col. 4, line 17 to col. 6, line 18) a status indicator signal that includes the unique vehicle identifier and the status indicator code (col. 4, lines 16-18);

g) receiving the status indicator signal at the legal compliance indicator (received by receiver 15) and decoding the status indicator signal (the decoder 17 decodes the received signal);

h) checking the unique vehicle identifier (VID) contained in the status indicator signal with the unique vehicle identifier stored in the memory (18) of the legal compliance indicator 12 (since only the VID and the status information are transmitted, in order to update the status of a particular vehicle, the VID must be compared or checked so that the particular vehicle can be identified and correctly updated); and

i) using the status code to update the status if the received VID matches the unique vehicle identifier in memory 18 (that is, the status of a particular vehicle is updated if the received VID matches with the ID of the particular vehicle).

Adcox differs from **claim 14** of the present invention in that Adcox does not disclose the status code is operably controlling the status indicator or display. However, as discussed above, Warner, from the same field of endeavor, similarly teaches a vehicle legal compliance system having a legal compliance indicator with a status indicator (28) which is operably controlled by the status indicator signal from the central computer 22 (col. 2, lines 21-23, col. 4, lines 56-62, col. 6, lines 42-47 and 64-65). As both Adcox and Warner disclosed a vehicle legal compliance system, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the teaching of Warner to the system of Adcox, in order to not only allow the police in the vicinity of the vehicle to control the display but also provide the additional advantage of allowing a personnel in central computer to control the display of the status indicator.

Claim 17 is rejected for the same reason as for claim 12 as discussed above.

Claim 18 is rejected for the same reason as for claim 13 as discussed above.

Claim 19 is rejected for the same reason as for claim 14 as discussed above.

Adcox further disclosed interrogating the legal compliance indicator (12) with a remote trigger (11) and causing the legal compliance indicator to visually display the compliance status (col. 3, lines 53-58).

Regarding claim 20, the remote trigger of Adcox is a radar gun (col. 4, line 30).

Art Unit: 2632

5. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adcox et al. (US 6,359,570 B1) in view of Warner (US 5,963,129) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Muramatsu et al. (US 6,611,229 B2).

The combination of Adcox and Warner further differs from **claim 6** of the present invention in that it does not show a GPS. However, Muramatsu disclosed a vehicle theft warning system with a GPS (Fig. 2, col. 9, lines 5-10). The advantage of such GPS system is to allow the authority or appropriate personnel to locate the location or position of the missing vehicle. As Adcox disclosed that his compliance system is capable of functioning as vehicle theft warning system by displaying a stolen status on the indicator (col. 4, lines 15 and 67) and the wide area paging and satellite-based network of Adcox (col. 3, lines 60-64) is capable of providing GPS service, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the GPS unit as taught by Muramatsu into the modified system of Adcox and Warner in order to allow the authority or appropriate personnel to identify the location or position of the stolen vehicle.

6. Claims 10, 11, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adcox in view of Warner as applied to claims 1 and 14 above, and further in view of Friedman et al. (US Pat. No. 4,929,936).

The combination of Adcox and Warner further differs from **claims 10 and 15** in that it does not disclose that the lights are red/green LEDs. That is, Adcox uses one light for green and another light for red instead of using one light for displaying either red or green. Friedman et al, similarly, teach a LED illumination sign for displaying status (for example, emergency status).

Art Unit: 2632

Friedman et al further teach that the same LED is capable of illuminating two distinguishable colors (red/green). See col. 1, lines 57-60 and col. 2, lines 25-27 and 41-44. Based on this teaching, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to replace each pair of red and green lights (for example, R and G in row 67, R and G in row 68 of Adcox, and so on) of Adxco with a multi colors (red/green) LED light as taught by Friedman et al in order to reduce components and costs.

Regarding **claims 11 and 16**, the modified system of Adcox, Warner and Friedman will have one multi colors (red/green) LED for insurance, one red/green LED for registration status, and one red/green LED for inspection status and so on (see Fig. 7 of Adcox). Any two of above discussed red/green LEDs can be considered as “a first red/green” LED and “a second red/green LED”. Adcox in col. 7, line 52 to col. 8, line 24 disclosed that when the compliance status of the vehicle is compliant, both the first and second red/green LEDs are green (by way of example, if insurance is currently in compliance with state law, a green light (first green) may be illuminated; and if the vehicle is properly registered, a green light (second green) may be illuminated); and when the compliance status of the vehicle is non-compliant, both the first and second red/green LEDs are red (by way of example, if insurance is uninsured, a red light (first red) may be illuminated; and if the vehicle’s registration has expired, a red light (second red) may be illuminated). Adcox further disclosed that when the vehicle has been reported as stolen, a red light may be illuminated (col. 8, lines 20-24). Although Adcox does not indicate both first and second red/green lights are flashing red, examiner takes Official Notice that flashing red light to bring attention is extremely well known and within the knowledge of a person having ordinary skill in the art. Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill

Art Unit: 2632

in the art at the time of the invention to flash the red lights of Adcox in order to attract more attention.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Prior art references Rai (US 6,222,463 B1), Elsman (US 6,029,102), Rose, Jr. (US 5,521,815) and Hofmann (US 5,396,233) are cited to show other similar vehicle legal compliance systems.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sihong Huang whose telephone number is 571-272-2958. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon, Thu & Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel J. Wu can be reached on 571-272-2964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sihong Huang
November 22, 2004

